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THE Modern Language Journal

Volume I

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PRACTICAL PHONETICS IN JUNIOR COLLEGE FRENCH (Concluded)

III

On this occasion, it was my distinct impression that it would be better to begin our text at this point rather than to go through the consonants in order; this it seemed wiser to do by degrees, beginning with the consonantal sounds and symbols most likely to cause trouble. The order in which these are taken up is naturally determined by the vocabulary given in the text. If a word like **il** or **jardin** or **champ** comes in the first lesson it may be necessary to demonstrate at once [1] or [ʒ] or [r] or [S]. Another difficulty, and a serious one, may arise here: if the text to be used does not indicate in phonetic transcription the pronunciation of each word in the vocabularies, it is necessary to devote some time to teaching the class the various spellings for the sounds as they appear, especially for the vowels; in the case of a text so provided there is no particular need of such a halt during these beginning days, for the spellings are learned by the class as they are given, and the instructor has only to group them from time to time, when two or more have occurred for the same sound.

The text that we use for beginners, Fraser and Squair's *French Grammar*, gives the phonetic transcription of each vocabulary. In the first five lessons are the following words that demand immediate attention, either because of the difficulty of pronouncing certain consonants in them or because the symbols give trouble for one reason or another: **crayon**, **voilà**, **chaise**, **aujourd'hui**.⁵ Hence, in addition to study and practice of all the vowels and their symbols, the class begins work at this point on the difficult sounds [r], [1], [w], [q], and must note especially the symbols [j], [S], [ʒ] .

⁵For obvious reasons it is needless to comment here on the objections to several of the consonantal symbols in the *Alphabet de l'association internationale*.

which are not so easily recognized. Of the very troublesome sounds or symbols, only [p] remains unnoticed, and as this does not occur until lesson 12 (except in the list on p. 2), it need not be considered before it is needed. It will occur to every teacher, of course, that there are other consonants than those named which might logically be discussed here: for example, the true French sounds represented by the symbols [t], [d], [n]; the proper way of uttering [b], [p]. The advisability of doing this, however, is open to question. When there is so much new material that must be presented, as during these first days, the instructor may sometimes be illogical with profit.

This order of treating the consonants applies naturally to a particular text-book: a different vocabulary, another order. Thus one may conceive of a beginner's book in which the difficulties of pronunciation would be graduated, and the different sounds be presented in small groups with appropriate exercises, but the present article is merely a record of what is done in an actual case.

Of the consonants selected as needing particular study from the first, the following present difficulties in the sound: [q], [w], [l], [r], [ʒ], and [ʃ], and have to be described and practised as diligently as the vowels. For the first of these (which may conveniently be called (qi) in the class room), as for [q], the important elements are forward tongue position and vigorous lip rounding. The instructor shows how increased tension, which causes the lips to advance slightly and to assume a puckered aspect, as if a draw string were being applied, leaving only a tiny hole at the center, enables him to pass from [y] to [q], the difference in sound being detected by the class even when the instructor's back is turned to the room. The well-known exercise of going from [y] to [i] (or from [y] to [e] and from [y] to [a], as in *cruel*, *suave*) more and more rapidly until the two make one sound is a good one. The energetic pressure of the lips against one another, except for the tiny center opening, must be emphasized repeatedly.

Then lists of words containing the sound are put on the board and practised. The instructor turns his back to the class and pronounces *suite* and the English *sweet*, *cuir* and the English *queer*, or similar pairs in order to rouse the students' ears to the very apparent difference between the French and English sounds. They are usually keen on exercises of this kind and are led to make

their own efforts more vigorous. The reason for turning around is obvious; the mouth position would betray the sound that is being pronounced.

A similar treatment is accorded to [w]: the important thing here is to distinguish it from English w, and the differing lip position is to be stressed. If position is taken for [u] and a similar tightening process takes place as in going from [y] to [ɥ], the resulting sound should be satisfactory. The lips are thrust out further than for the last sound and the center hole is slightly larger. Contrasts may be made as above: **oui** and English **we**, **soit** and **swat**. It is well to choose for practice words in which a preceding bilabial encourages lip rounding: **bois, pois, moi, poêle**; for drilling on [y] one would give **puis, buisson, depuis, puits**.

The greatest difficulty in the way of a good pronunciation of these sounds is the almost invincible slothfulness of our lip muscles, and this must be the point of the most vigorous attack. To students who have mastered [y] the tongue position of [ɥ] is not impossible.

It is easier to get a fairly good [l], though not easy to inculcate good habits in respect to this sound. The students are asked to pronounce **bell** holding the tongue tip against the palate as the end of the word finds it. Then they are asked to say the same word, tightening up the muscles as for French and with the tongue tip very lightly touching the cutting edge of the upper teeth. The result is **belle** (or **bel**). They see the difference at once and distinguish between **bell** and **belle**, **ell** and **elle**, **eel** and **il**, the front vowels simplifying the necessary shift of position. The reader sees readily why end-position is emphasized in these examples: [l] initial or in groups is less troublesome.⁶

When we get to [p] the chief point is not to heed the time honored precept that it is made like **ny** in **onion**, but to insist that the student's tongue must not touch his palate in **agneau**, for example, until the second syllable is reached. At that moment the blade is placed somewhat firmly against the hard palate, the tip touching the upper teeth and visible in the opening, in contrast to what is true in English position. Words containing high front vowels are best for practising this sound as (**digne dignité**), and it must be

⁶See the article by J. L. Barker, *Modern Philology*, Nov., 1916, p. 413.

insisted that it is made in one solid block, as opposed to the English **ny** of **canyon**, which is divided between the two syllables.

What directions are we to give for the [r]? Shall we teach or try to teach our classes the uvular sound? Most teachers with whom I talk seem to be in the habit of explaining both this and the tip [r] to their students, of telling them that it is absolutely necessary to pronounce one or the other of these audibly, and of leaving the choice to them. This has a certain advantage, for it is easier for some students to sound [R] than [r], and occasionally a teacher encourages the pupils to practise the [R] out of class and rewards those who succeed in acquiring it. Another competent teacher in a secondary school is undertaking to introduce the [R] to his classes generally, to the exclusion of the other.

It is my practice, however, to devote my energies to the [r], as being nearer the American speech habit and as being as thoroughly a French sound, in quite as good standing as [R]. The class is told of the other and occasionally a student really desires to acquire it, in which he is encouraged, but class drill is centered on [r]. The method of demonstration is much as for [l]. The instructor pronounces several familiar words (as **Marie, Paris**) or one or two English words, as **bring, French**, *à la française*, which serves to bring to their ears at once the difference between the French way of sounding this consonant and their own. The students are then asked to pronounce a word like **cur**, keeping the tongue tip in the final position long enough to tell where it is. They try other words, and discover that the tongue tip in English is turned up toward the center of the hard palate and receives the vibration of the current of air from the throat. Then they are shown that for the [r] there is no such withdrawal and upward curving; that the tip is well forward in the mouth; and that it is easy to go from [i] to [r] by allowing the tip to rise slightly to a position behind the front teeth where it vibrates under the impetus of the current of air. This needs frequent demonstration and abundant practice, words in which the [r] is followed by a high vowel or preceded by a consonant formed in the alveolar region being helpful, as: **Marie, rire, triple, trou, traïter, irriter, drap**. Words like **trois, droit** present more difficulty because of the troublesome bilabial that follows. For students who wish to practise [R], one may suggest words like **écrire, gris, crème, gras**, in which the preceding con-

sonant helps in taking position, with the back of the tongue arched high to receive the current of air, or a series like **ca**, **ga**, **ra**, which tends to put the tongue in position.

It takes a long time to get satisfactory results for either sound, at least with students from the land of the cerebral [r]; toward the end of the first year the profit on our investment of effort begins to grow, and second year classes are often satisfying. It may be noted in passing that students from our southern or eastern states might have to be treated somewhat differently, especially from those parts of the South where certain vowels are noticeably diphthongised before [r], as in the Tennessee pronunciation of **hurt**, **first**, (**hœit**, **foëist**). Thus **meurtre** might yield [mœitr] in the mouth of a Nashvillian.

The usual directions for [S] and [ʒ], that is, to pronounce them respectively as **sh** in **shut** and **s** in **pleasure**, are hardly sufficient. The students are instructed to stick out their lips more vigorously than for these English sounds, with just the opposite of the puckered, drawn effect prescribed for [ʋ] and [w] (the lower lip is perceptibly advanced), and to keep the tongue point further forward than for **sh**. If the French sound be uttered close to a student's ear he will remark a slight whistling effect which is absent from the English.

For [ʒ] the process is similar with the addition of voice. In this connection it may be remarked that it has been not found necessary to do more than mention the phenomena of voicing, and in some such connection as this, for our students are not troubled to distinguish between surds and sonants. They mispronounce the letter **s** as in **maison**, very persistently, but that is merely eye-association.

These are the only consonants that demand especial treatment, in my presentation; the less troublesome sounds are commented on later and at less length, though the class learns to distinguish the sharper [t], [d], [n], from the corresponding English sounds, and to ascribe the difference to a changed tongue position accompanied by a more vigorous muscular action. Such differences are, however, more delicate, and may wait until second year for much attention. In such cases good phonograph records would be valuable, as also when the time comes to study intonation and sentence rhythm.

It is needless to say that from the first, attention is given to syllabication, meaning of accent marks, liaison, and the like, as well as to rules of thumb about final consonants, elision in monosyllables, syllable stress: these matters are taken up in any introduction to French pronunciation, whether handled from the physiological standpoint or not.

IV

The class has now been studying French for about three weeks. At some time during each recitation period the vowel triangle has been reviewed, individually and in chorus, forward and backward, and all the most troublesome consonants have been discussed and diligently practised in similar fashion. Since the phonetic symbols have been used in all this work to represent the sounds under discussion, these have been learned by the class as a matter of course, and without a deliberate effort of memory, as far as I have been able to observe. From the first lesson they have been asked to write in phonetic transcription two or three sentences of the written work, the grammar providing them with all the apparatus necessary. It is worth noting that advanced students in phonetics, who have to approach the use of the symbols less deliberately, complain more vigorously than our beginners.

By what names are the students to designate the symbols? It is manifestly absurd and unscientific to adopt symbols for sounds in order to get away from the traditional notation, and then straightway to give to these symbols names that fail to indicate their supposed values. If the class is to be allowed to call [j], **jay**, and [r] **arr**, and [u], **you** it seems to me that the students are simply being encouraged to strengthen old incorrect associations and to form new ones. It is, therefore, my practice to insist from the beginning that the symbols be called by names that indicate as accurately as possible the sounds for which they stand. When we wish to speak of the symbol [j] we pronounce the sound it represents, with a following vowel, if need be; similarly for [S] or for [a]. The students do not take to this too readily; they have an odd sort of self-consciousness about it, but they neither hear nor use the incorrect terminology in class, thus avoiding at least one negative influence. This is not a grave matter, but nothing is to be gained by adopting a line of march and then encouraging straggling.

If in the early days of the year, the plan outlined above has been

followed in its essentials, the pronunciation work for the days that follow is already indicated. It is a good practice to put on the board several times each week lists of words, now in the ordinary transcription, now in phonetic symbols, or, perhaps, detached syllables, in order to review and to test the class. These are run over rapidly, with especial attention to the students whose ears are dull or who have trouble with particular sounds. The vocabulary of the lesson in advance is pronounced by the instructor and the class, accompanied by remarks on new or difficult details, students read aloud and hear read all the exercises in the text, and do a part of each written exercise in phonetic transcription, which they are to read aloud. When the reading text is taken up, about the fourth or fifth week, similar practice on a larger scale is continued, and at an early stage of this the instructor reads aloud repeatedly and assigns for study a short passage, a paragraph or two, in which the class is to try to reproduce the movement of the phrase, as well as to make the sounds correctly.

In the third and fourth quarters (last three months of the first college year and first three of the second) we are trying the experiment of using a phonetic reader,⁷ hoping more effectively to fix the student's attention on the proper practice in regard to elision, liaison, breath grouping, intonation, and all those other matters which are even more important than the correct pronunciation of the individual sounds and words, and a hundred times more difficult to teach. The student reads repeatedly the same passage until the eye no longer meets with any difficulty, or he learns a passage or a poem by heart by reading it over and over. He should, it is argued, be able then to fix his attention entirely on the débit, having removed all the barriers possible, leaving as short a gap as possible between perception and utterance, thus finding himself as nearly as possible in the position of some one speaking. My own experience with this auxiliary was encouraging; so much so that I shall use it again, more vigorously.

V

It may seem to the teacher who has never taken notes on himself, and on what he does when introducing his class to French pronun-

⁷S. A. Richards, *Phonetic French Reader*, Dutton, N. Y.; Ballard and Tilly, *Phonetic French Reader*, Scribner's, N. Y.

ciation, that the material set down above is too abundant, that it can not be adequately presented in the manner indicated and leave time for other things. It would be of interest if such a teacher would observe accurately his own activities in the early pronunciation period and set down just what he does during the first three weeks, and how he does it. He would be surprised at the extent and variety of the material he has presented, and at the number of times he has made use of practical phonetics.

This method of treating pronunciation is more difficult than the old imitative process in the sense that it demands more time and thought of the teacher in planning his presentation, as well as in seeking light from recognized sources⁸ on matters that give him trouble; but it is certainly more interesting, as it appeals to his intelligence and exercises his ingenuity. However, as this is an expository and not an argumentative article, let us pass at once to the concluding observations, four in number.

1. All the work done as outlined above will be comparatively useless unless it is followed up by diligent repetition and practice throughout at least 125 to 150 recitation periods. Physiological explanations and diagrams are futile unless made the basis of constant and intelligent effort to form accurate associations in the pupil's mind. In all cases the initiative must come, of course, from the instructor, but no other method of presenting the matter to students of high school and college age can give them such a definite and satisfactory basis for individual effort and home practice in overcoming their particular defects in pronouncing French.

2. Even the most intelligent application of phonetic aids to pronunciation will not, in a short time, totally change the speech habits of American students of college age. One year does not suffice to do that, nor two, except in rare cases; they may learn to pronounce really quite correctly and to read aloud intelligently, but I have still to find a way of having them acquire a sufficiently vivid sense of the music of the French sentence as to reproduce it successfully. They have had no training in reading aloud in their own language, nor do they always know that a sentence often

⁸For example: Rousselot, *Précis de prononciation française*, Paris, Welter, 1902; Nicholson, *Introduction to French Pronunciation*, London, Macmillan, 1909; Martinon, *Comment on prononce le français*, Paris, Larousse, 1913; Michaelis—Passy, *Dictionnaire phonétique français*; International French Pronouncing Dictionary, Hinds, Noble & Eldredge, N. Y.

conveys more than the information or the statement contained in it: why should they not be slow in recognizing that the French sentence is often made for the ear almost more than for the eye? But this difficulty confronts all teachers, regardless of the method that they use. It is here that imitation must play the chief rôle. There are certain helpful diagrams⁹ to be sure, but the instructor's own way of reading aloud, supplemented by models on the phonograph, must be peculiarly the standard.

3. It is impossible to weigh and measure precisely the results from one method as opposed to another, unless one can be absolutely sure that both are being employed by teachers of equal competence in classes of equal mental ability. However, in so far as I am able to observe and evaluate my own teaching of pronunciation in beginning French classes, it has gained in interest and effectiveness for me and for my classes as we have used simply and discreetly the elementary physiological language material presented in these pages.

4. If it be admitted that it is worth while to teach French in colleges as a living language, that it is good pedagogy to bring the ear as well as the eye into play for acquiring a vocabulary, and to create a more active attitude toward the subject through the interest that a rational, demonstrable treatment of pronunciation rarely fails to arouse; if after the preliminary detailed exposition of the mechanics of making French sounds, we weave our phonetic drill about the material that the student is mastering, and make it clear that all this is an excellent means to a desirable end, and not merely a new sort of grimoire that he must decipher and learn by rote—if the instructor does that, the time needed for a common sense application of phonetic principles to the teaching of pronunciation to beginners is well applied, and should by no means be regarded as so much subtracted from the all too few hours that we have to spend with our elementary French classes.

A. COLEMAN.

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⁹Klinghardt und de Fourmestraux, *Französische Intonationsübungen*. Cöthen, 1911.

THE GERMAN CLUB

For the benefit of those teachers who are responsible for the pleasure and profit, which means the success, of a German Club, I have been asked to tell some of my devices, my experiences, and my difficulties and methods of avoiding them.

A few excellent articles have been written on this subject. One, in the introduction to "Easy German Conversation" by Philip S. Allen, and Paul H. Phillipson (Ginn and Co.), I should advise every club sponsor to read. The expressions used in Parliamentary Practice are invaluable, though we use them in a much simplified form. The games and suggestions are most helpful and probably practical in most clubs. However, many of them it is impossible to use in a club like mine. Messrs. Allen and Phillipson presuppose a much greater familiarity with German, a larger vocabulary, and a greater readiness of speech than my pupils, many of them with only one year of high-school German as a background, possess.

The German Department of the Kansas State Normal School at Emporia has recently issued a useful collection of suggestions for games, entitled "German Games and German and English Books." Directions are given in German for playing many interesting games suitable both for clubs and class room. Unfortunately this pamphlet is not available for wide distribution at the present, but may be later.

In the October (1916) number of *Aus Nah und Fern*, p. 21, is an article by Adele Meyer Autcalt on "Der Deutsche Verein," which includes "Satzungen des Deutschen Vereins," a most excellent Constitution for any club to adopt. It is divided into seven articles:

- I Name und Zweck.
- II Mitgliederschaft.
- III Pflichten der Mitglieder.
- IV Versammlungen.
- V Vorstand.
- VI Pflichten des Vorsitzenden.
- VII Änderungen und Zusätze.

She promises in a later number "Eine Liste von Ausdrücken, die man in der Sitzung gebraucht," and further suggestions to add to

a valuable list consisting of stereopticon views, songs, special programs appropriate to the seasons, as "*Ostereiersuchen*."

Her suggestions as to the sources of material for club programs are scarcely applicable in our club, however, as she suggests that the class work be made the basis for reading extracts, dramatizations, remarks on the life of the author, and his native town. Our club is composed of members of half a dozen different classes, many of whom have used no book beyond their Grammar, and different Grammars are used in different classes.

As to membership, we are most liberal. Any member of the school who has had one semester of German may ask to have his, or usually her, name presented. If the sponsor approves, she presents the name of the candidate to the President, and it is voted on at the next meeting. The meetings are held on alternate Thursdays, alternating with the Literary Societies and Debating Clubs, which makes it possible to join both Literary and Departmental Clubs. There are a great variety of Departmental Clubs: German, French, Latin, Wireless, Scientific, Dramatic, etc., and as any member in good standing may transfer to any club in which he is more interested, the membership is constantly shifting. The clubs meet from 4:30 to 5:30 p. m., and as we have an extremely long session lasting from 8:30 a. m. to 4:30 p. m., with no recess except at noon, neither teachers nor pupils at the end of so long a session are as full of vitality as they should be to make a most successful meeting.

Believing that other teachers may find themselves leaders of a group of young people, whose capacity for initiating or executing stimulating programs is very slight, but whose critical taste and craving for amusement is highly developed, and not always easy to satisfy, I shall suggest some of the diversions which we have found practical and successful.

The club sponsors are supposed to be merely advisers, but in a language club, the secret of success is in supervising not only every program but the work of every member. Each member who is to appear in any way must have consulted with the sponsor and usually have rehearsed—often rehearsed several times—, for unless he speaks slowly, uses the most simple words, and repeats what is difficult, he cannot make himself understood. A teacher can read a story to her class and make every pupil understand it.

Let a pupil read the same story and not half of them will grasp it; but an able pupil may be taught how to read the story and make it understood. The pupils are not able to plan the programs without guidance, for they usually lose sight of the main object which is *to make every member converse or say something in German at every meeting; to practise talking.*

If the requirements are too complicated or too difficult, no one will speak; if too formal or too long, only three or four take part, and usually the same already most expert three or four. This was the cause of failure in a scheme which was tried last year. Four members of the German faculty were responsible for the club, each taking charge of a meeting in turn. The programs were quite elaborate, very thoroughly planned, and most interesting. One was a puppet play, "Ein Knopf" from Manley & Allen's "Four German Comedies," and much time was spent in preparation. Four or five of the best pupils read the parts, two or three others manipulated the puppets, which were most amusing in form and movement, so that the club was greatly entertained, although I doubt whether they understood much of the German. The next meeting was in memory of the Shakespeare tercentenary. Choice selections were copied for each member. Some appropriate music and songs were rendered and a scene from "Midsummer Night's Dream" given. In this scene the same most clever five or six were chosen by the teacher in charge, who wished her meeting to be as successful as the last. The third meeting was a lantern-slide talk by a few of the members. Only two or three were asked to explain the pictures, and again the same most expert students, who needed the practice least, were given the advantage. So, for several months the less talented, who were really the majority, were only a very well entertained audience, a position which they were only too willing to occupy, and in which they spend altogether more time than is profitable.

This year one teacher has charge of all programs, except the Christmas program, and the annual picnic, which occurs at the last meeting in the spring. The meetings are as general as possible, each member knowing that he is to take some part, to practise speaking German, and to contribute to the interest of every meeting. The president opens the meeting with: "Hiermit eröffne ich die Versammlung," and conducts the meeting

in German; in fact no word of English is supposed to be used by anyone, and rarely is. On the program, which is posted on the bulletin board, it has been announced that the roll will be answered by an appropriate greeting, at Christmas; by the name of a composer, at a musical program; by the name of some German city, or river, or state, at a stereopticon meeting; by a German word spelled backward, which the other members name as soon as it is recognized; by a proverb; by the name of a character in William Tell; by a mythical hero; by something appropriate to the meeting of the day. Hereupon the secretary reads the minutes of the preceding meeting; the sponsor has previously corrected and revised them. If there are no objections, they are approved. The usual routine of business is transacted. The critic of the former meeting reads his report, and as he has previously consulted with the sponsor, the latter has an opportunity here to suggest and criticise indirectly. A new critic is appointed. The vice-president, who is the chairman of the program committee (consisting of president, one member appointed by the president, and the sponsor), then announces and explains the program for the next meeting. A song or two is sung. The formal program is presented. We play a game or two. A motion for adjournment is made, seconded, and the president concludes the meeting. The first half of the year the sponsor instructs one pupil to say at a signal from her, or at the request of the president, "Ich mache den Vorschlag die Versammlung zu vertagen;" another to say "Ich unterstütze den Vorschlag."

Examples of Formal Programs

I. A simple program for the beginning of the year.

Each member has advised with the sponsor, and chosen some object which he is to describe without naming it. It may be a chair, whose four legs and back he describes elaborately, and concludes with a statement of its use, which makes one wonder if it might be a horse. It may be a building, for example the postoffice building; a person, perhaps; or an animal. The secretary keeps the list of numbers and subjects chosen. At the meeting each member is provided with paper and pencil, and as each in turn gives his description, all the others put down what they guess it is that has been described. The papers are then

collected, the list compared with the secretary's list, and the one having the greatest number of correct guesses receives a prize.

A long word is then written on the board, for example, "Naturwissenschaft." At a given signal all begin to write words formed from the letters contained in the word on the board, until the signal is given to stop. The one having written the most words receives a prize, and his list is read.

For the game on that day, one might play "Consequences." Each person is supplied with a long strip of paper, at the top of which he writes:

1. A man's name or title; folds the paper over, passes it to his right-hand neighbor, who writes
2. A woman's name or title; folds and passes. Then there is written
3. Where they meet;
4. What he says;
5. What she says; and
6. The consequences.

After passing once more, the papers are opened and read, and the sequence is often most amusing.

II. A Thanksgiving program.

It has been announced that the club is to fill a Thanksgiving basket, to help supply one of the dinners to be given out by the Associated Charities. Each member is to tell why or for what he, personally, is thankful. (Some give serious reasons, others humorous). Also, what he is willing to furnish for the dinner. The sponsor has advised with each, so that there may be a variety, that the gifts may be reasonable and moderate, and that each child may know the German word for his gift—pie, pumpkin, or jelly, etc. A few of the older members read papers which they have prepared, to show why the world at large, or we Americans in particular, should be thankful. Another member reads an appropriate story; for example "Die kleine Wohltäterin" from Collar's "First Year German" (Ginn).

A game, well suited to the day, would be to draw on the board a basket overflowing with fruit, vegetables, etc. One member begins by saying "Ich packe den Danksagungskorb mit Äpfeln." The rest in order: "Ich packe den Danksagungskorb mit Äpfeln

und Kuchen," the next repeating and adding a third article, and so on. It is remarkable to see how long a list can be repeated before a mistake is made in the order, or even in the use of singular for plural, etc. The instant a mistake is made, hands are clapped, and a forfeit is demanded by the vice-president, who is always master of the games.

Games requiring forfeits are very popular, as the redeeming of forfeits furnishes much amusement. (The same "stunts" may be used at a mock initiation in the Fall, when a large number of new members are elected). One member, who has been posted by the sponsor, is seated while the vice-president holds a forfeit over his head, and asks: "Was soll der Besitzer tun, um sein Pfand zu lösen?" The one seated answers:

1. "Der Besitzer soll auf einen Stuhl steigen und dreimal krähen: "Kikeriki, es ist noch zu früh!"
2. "Erklären, was man am liebsten tut und warum."
3. "Erklären, welche Spielerin—Kino-Königin—man am liebsten sieht, und warum." (Movies are of necessity favorite topics of conversation.)
4. "Drei Vorzüge nennen, die die Knaben vor den Mädchen haben, oder die Mädchen vor den Knaben."
5. "Erklären, was man für das Beste in der Welt hält, und warum."
6. "Ein Gedicht deklamieren."
7. "Ein Wort zwanzigmal an die Tafel schreiben."
8. "Amerikanerinnen rückwärts buchstabieren."

Many other suggestions are made by Allen and Phillipson, e.g., comparisons and singing; but with us the simpler acts are preferred, and are performed more promptly and furnish more amusement.

III. A musical program.

A brief sketch of the life of a composer is given by one member, followed by an explanation of the piece to be performed by another. The selections may be vocal or instrumental, or if a Victrola is available the choice is even wider, and the words of a song may be read before the piece is given. Naturally, there is no end of material for such programs.

IV. A favorite program, which we call a Conversation Meeting.

Each member is supplied with a program similar to a dance card—sometimes with pencil attached. He then secures a partner for each of the subjects for conversation, as if for a dance. The subjects vary, but might be

1. Das Wetter.
2. Meine Lehrer und Lehrerinnen.
3. Meine Spielkameraden.
4. Was ich am liebsten tue.
5. Die allerliebste Jahreszeit.
6. Spiele.

At a given signal each finds the first partner, and converses upon the first subject until the signal is given to pass to number two.

V. Each member relates an anecdote.

Anecdotes are related to the sponsor in rehearsal, so that they will not include words unknown to the majority, or so they will not be spoiled by rapid or indistinct recitation. Sometimes a vote is taken for the best anecdote and a prize awarded.

VI. Charades.

The club is divided into groups, each being responsible for one or two charades, which the others guess. The sponsor must see that they are rehearsed before being presented, as young people depend too confidently upon the inspiration of the moment. One might act out *Sicher—Kaufmann—Bismarck—Ausruf—Überbord—Überrock*.

VII. Spelling down.

For variety, sides may be chosen, and when one side misses, and the other side spells the word correctly, it can choose a member from the losing side. One might give out the words of a well-known poem, "Der Erlkönig" for example.

VIII. Stereopticon pictures.

If each pupil describes two or three slides, he secures much profit. The sponsor provides each pupil with his slides, and an explanation of what is to be done, urging him to find everything of interest that he can in the picture. After he has prepared and

learned his description he practises before the sponsor. Perhaps this point seems over-emphasized, but it is of extreme importance and it makes all the difference between a successful meeting and a failure, whether the pupil can "get across" what he has to give.

Several meetings with slides can be held, using pictures

a. Of typical German scenes.

b. Of the great cities of Germany.

c. Of the Rhine, where the river is traced from source to mouth, and as each castle is shown the story of the castle is told. These stories may be found in "Im Vaterland," (Allyn and Bacon), "Geschichten vom Rhein" (Ginn), and Prokosch's "German for Beginners" (Holt).

d. Of the homes of celebrities. Weimar, and the houses of Goethe and Schiller. Worms, and Luther. Mainz, and Gutenberg, etc.

IX. Illustrated poems.

Some well-known poems are acted out in a farcical way. As one member reads "Heidenröslein," two others act out the poem. A girl in pink paper rose cap and armed with a hat-pin defends herself, while the wild boy tries to grasp her. As another reads "Die Lorelei" a boatman sitting in a small tin tub is fishing, and gazing at the rocks, made of table, chair, and stool, and covered with a sheet, on which the maid sits combing her hair. A tragic ending ensues. Another reads Chamisso's "Tragische Geschichte" while a boy in pigtailed wig and kimono twists frantically from left to right, etc. Another reads "Der weisse Hirsch" by Uhland. Here each hunter may speak his own part, blow his horn, etc., as the white deer covered by a sheet dashes by. "Du bist wie eine Blume" and "Versuchung" might be treated in the same frivolous manner.

X. Living pictures.

A mythological story is told of a hero or heroine mentioned in the German grammars, or readers, and a tableau follows, as Barbarossa and his Dwarf, Thor and his Hammer, Siegfried and his Sword.

XI. A newspaper.

One person is appointed editor-in-chief, who appoints a sub-

editor for each department, with assistants, including thus the entire membership. The departments may include

News at large.

Local news.

Sporting news.

Personal items. (Being humorous reports of the doings of various members.)

Advertisements. (Mentioning the foibles of the various members.)

Editorials. (Fictitious announcements of changes in the school curriculum, etc.)

XII. William Tell meeting.

1. A few remarks on the author, date, etc.

2. A description of the opening scene, with its storm as an introduction to

3. The playing of an overture by a victrola, or on the piano.

4. Recitation or singing of the songs in Act I, Scene I, or Act III, Scene I.

5. Melchthal's monologue on blindness, Act I, Scene IV.

6. The acting out of the beginning of Act III, Scene I.

7. The apple shooting scene, Act III, Scene III.

XIII. Dialogues, etc.

Simple scenes and conversations may be adapted from "Vorwärts," "Im Vaterland" (both Allyn and Bacon) or based on the stories in "Lose Blätter" (Am. Book Co.). The Francis Parker School (Chicago) has prepared some dialogues, and others may be secured from the Geo. Brumder Company in Milwaukee, or from other German publishing houses. In Walter-Krause's "Beginners' German" (Scribner) are many good riddles.

XIV. A Christmas program.

Each member has previously contributed ten cents toward the refreshments and furnished a toy wrapped and labeled. As examples of these labels I quote two composed by pupils this year. On a tin boat: "Hier ist das Deutschland. Fahre nach England und kämpfe fürs Vaterland." On a woolly dog: "Ich bin ein kleiner deutscher Hund, Und kann kein Englisch sprechen,

Doch leb' ich fröhlich und gesund, Wenn Sie mich nimmer necken." After the preliminary business, a Christmas Fairy, or "Sankt Nicklas" or "Knecht Ruprecht" distributes to each member a number.

Then a Christmas dialogue is given, or an adaptation from Bernhardt's Composition, Lesson 4 (Ginn), "Der Christbaum," when each tree states its claim to being pronounced the favorite. Each member with some symbol represents a tree, and appeals to the judge. *Die Eiche* speaks of the strength of its wood and shows its acorns as *Früchte*. *Der Kirschbaum* scorns the "Früchte für die Schweine" and shows her fruit, etc. Finally the Christmas tree's claims are admitted, and a screen is removed disclosing a lighted Christmas tree. The gifts are then distributed by number, the inscriptions are read, and while the horns are tooting and the drums beating, the refreshments of apples, candy, Christmas cakes, etc., are passed.¹

Many of the following games are too common to need description, but I shall suggest how they may be played so that they will furnish the most profit and amusement.

1. *Proverbs*. Half of a German proverb is printed on one card, half on another. The cards are shuffled and dealt. (Not more than four or five to each person should be dealt, and not more than ten persons should play the game in one group. We have two sets of cards with different proverbs, and alternate the sets). Each person in turn draws from his neighbor. As soon as a complete proverb is held, it is read aloud and laid aside as a set. The person securing the most sets wins the game.

2. *Ich sehe etwas*. The club is divided into two groups by numbering *eins*, *zwei*; *eins*, *zwei*. All numbered *eins*, sit in a circle at one end of the room. All numbered *zwei* at the other end of the room. Each group sends one member out of the room. When the two agree upon some object in the room, each returns to the opposite group and announces, "Ich sehe etwas." Then in turn each member asks a question in the hope of guessing as quickly as possible the object. The one questioned can answer to these questions only *ja* or *nein*. The group which guesses the object first chooses a member from the other side, and much

¹An excellent and simple play is "Das schönste Bild" from "Zum Weihnachtsfeste," gesammelt von J. Christlieb. (Brumder, Milwaukee).

excitement and eagerness to be the first and enlarge one's group is developed. As the pupils become more skillful, this game can be played by announcing "Ich denke an etwas" which leads to a wider choice of objects, and more complicated questioning. This game is usually played with all of the group knowing the object except the one sent out, but if reversed and played as described above, the many instead of the one ask the German questions and derive the benefit of the language practice.

3. *Das Uhrspiel*. With the same general arrangement, a time of day is agreed upon by the two members who leave the room, and much practice in fluency and accuracy of idiom in expressions of time is gained by those eager to get the answer first. There is soon no beating around the bush. No. 1 asks: "Ist es vormittags?"—"Nein." No. 2: "Ist es nachmittags?"—"Nein." No. 3: "Ist es denn nach sechs Uhr?"—"Ja." No. 4: "Ist es zwischen sechs und neun?" usw.

4. *Kofferpacken*. The game outlined in the Thanksgiving program may be played, by saying "Ich packe meinen Koffer mit—". When this becomes too simple an adjective may be added to the object packed.

5. *The Circle Game*. By numbering *eins, zwei; eins, zwei*, the club is divided and two circles are formed, one within the other. The sponsor, perhaps, stands in the center and counts and the circles revolve while she counts. When she stops, they stop, and each No. 1 asks a question of the opposite No. 2, and receives an answer very quickly, because as the counting begins the circles must revolve again. However, at the next pause the No. 2 asks the question, and No. 1 answers. As some confusion usually occurs and both ask questions at once and try to answer at once, much merriment is aroused.

6. *Drei Fragen*. The questioner leaves the room, while the others choose some object. Upon her return she can ask just three questions of each one: Wie gebrauchen Sie es?

Wann (oder wo) gebrauchen Sie es?

Warum gebrauchen Sie es?

The person from whose answers the object is guessed becomes the next questioner.

7. *Spelling Game*. All sit in a circle. The first person names a letter of the alphabet; the next in turn names another letter,

which might go toward forming a word; and so on. If one cannot think of a letter he must pay a forfeit, or if he thinks the previous letter will not form a word he may challenge the giver, who must spell the word correctly or pay a forfeit. No forfeit is required for ending a word.

8. *Land—Luft—Wasser.* All sit in a circle. One member holds a knotted towel, which he throws at another member, calling at the same time "Land" or "Luft" or "Wasser." He then begins to count ten. Before "zehn" is uttered the player designated must have named a creature of the land, air, or water, depending upon which is called for. If he cannot name one, he becomes "it." While vocabularies are still limited, a list of animals which can be used is placed on the blackboard. This game can be varied by calling "Was bringt die Zeitung?" Then the reply must be a word ending in "ung;" or by calling "Wie ist der Knabe gekommen?" The answer to be an appropriate past participle, as *gelaufen—gesprungen*.

9. *In another circle game*, questions are asked, which must be answered in words of one syllable, or a forfeit is required.

10. *Die böse Sieben.* All count in turn, about a circle. The one whose turn it is to say a number containing 7 or a multiple of 7, must say instead *brrr*—. A forfeit is the result if a mistake is made.

Games like "Authors" can be played, as *Tierquartett—Vogelquartett—Pflanzenquartett*. Lists suitable for these games are published in a most useful little pamphlet by Philip S. Allen, entitled "Hints on the Teaching of German Conversation" (Ginn).

At the last meeting of each semester the officers for the coming semester are elected. By printing in large letters in both English and German on sheets of stiff pasteboard, the expressions necessary in nominating officers, closing nominations, preparing the ballots, etc., and tacking these sheets up in the front of the room where all can see, the election of officers can be conducted in German. This form of meeting always arouses a great enthusiasm; in fact, so much so that we have sometimes held mock elections for parliamentary practice, in which election each member must take some part, nominate an officer, or make a motion; if so ridiculous a one results as that which proposed that the club "buy a cow," it often leads to lively discussions.

I have added here the very simple forms used by the president in conducting the meeting.

Hiemit eröffne ich die Versammlung.

Der Sekretär wird ersucht den Appell zu verlesen.

Beantworten Sie, bitte, mit—.

Der Sekretär (Schriftführer) wird ersucht, das Protokoll der letzten Versammlung (Sitzung) zu verlesen.

Wenn niemand etwas dagegen hat, ist es angenommen.

Ich ersuche den Vize-Präsidenten das nächste Programm zu verlesen.

Ich ersuche den Kritiker seine Kritik zu verlesen.

Ich nenne—— — zum Kritiker.

Gibt es anderes Geschäft?

Höre ich einen Vorschlag zu vertagen?

Ich schliesse die Sitzung.

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THE DIRECT METHOD†

To some people a discussion of the direct method will seem on a par with trying to force a door that is already open. Others will say: "Still discussing the direct method! Naturally. It's a very easy method to discuss and a very hard method to practise." Still others will say: "Method?—Humbug."

But this is a matter I have always taken very much to heart, because as a university man I think it is my duty to know something about how to teach my subject and how others teach it. I have never felt that there was any ground for smug complacency with respect to the so-called "old method" of teaching modern languages. I have also been afraid of the direct method because it seemed extravagant. Further, I was never sure of what it meant precisely. Some time ago I sent a list of 16 questions to 140 members of the Modern Language Association, representing schools and colleges all over the country, hoping, not for a complete polling of all the vote, but for some indication of the general trend. I was not quite willing to trust the conclusions of the partisans of the direct method, and it looked as though its opponents were too discreetly silent, or at least too silent. I have made an attempt to indicate briefly what replies I received.

The first two questions sought for a definition of the term *direct method*.

Says Professor Skinner of Dartmouth College: "Strictly speaking, the method advocated by the *Société internationale phonétique*, printed on the cover of its organ, the *Maître Phonétique*.¹ Or the

†Paper read before the Romance Section of the Modern Language Association, Chicago, December 28, 1916.

¹Also on pp. XI–XIV, Passy-Rambeau, *Créto-mathie Française*, 2d. ed., Paris, 1901. Briefly, those principles are: 1) The essential thing to be studied first in a foreign language is not the more or less archaic language of literature, but the spoken language of every day. 2) The first concern of the teacher must be to make the SOUNDS of the foreign language familiar to his pupils. For this purpose he should use a phonetic transcription which should be used to the exclusion of the traditional orthography during the first part of the course. 3) In the second place, the teacher should teach the most common sentences and idiomatic turns of the foreign language. For this he should assign connected texts, dialogs, descriptions, narrations, as easy, as natural, and as interesting as possible. 4) Grammar is to be taught inductively as a generalization of phenomena observed in the course of the reading.—A more systematic study should be reserved for the end of the course. 5) As much as possible, he should associate the expressions of the foreign language directly to ideas

same system without the use of the phonetic transcription. NOTHING² else is the DIRECT METHOD with capital letters."

Professor Nitze of Chicago University says: "An *adaptation* [italics my own] to American needs of the German *Reform-Methode*³ (See Viëtor, Quiehl, Walter, etc.) or the French *méthode directe* (Schweitzer, Hovelacque) * * * though I cannot here fully qualify my view point."

Mr. Manley, Englewood High School, Chicago, parries with: "Which one! There are several."

Says a college professor: "'Natural Method', Meisterschaft, or Berlitz, for example."⁴

The following definitions are typical of what may be called the extreme vagaries of the direct method:

1) "Instruction exclusively in the vernacular [sic] [i. e. foreign tongue]: Induction by pictures, illustrations, actions and various expedients"—[such as singing, reciting in unison, use of gestures, etc.]

2) "A method of teaching a language by which that language is used by the students and teacher from the beginning. The conversational work *may* [italics my own] be supplemented by text book or note book."

and other expressions of the same language and not to those of the mother tongue. Every time he can, he should replace translation by object lessons, lessons in pictures and explanations given in the foreign language. 6) When he later gives written exercises they should be reproductions of texts already read and explained in class; then summaries of narrations made aloud by himself to the class; then translation (written) and retranslation.

²Others say the "method advocated by Max Walter"—which is essentially the same as the *méthode directe*.

³The *Reform-Methode*, as set forth in the Prussian order of 1902, differs mainly from the *méthode directe*, as defined in the French decree of 1901, in allowing greater use of the vernacular and in forbidding grammars in the foreign tongue. Cf., e. g., Paul Roques, *Les langues vivantes dans les lycées allemands*, *Revue Universitaire*, May 15, 1914, and Chas. M. Purin, *The Direct Teaching of Modern Foreign Languages in American High Schools*, *THE MODERN LANGUAGE JOURNAL*, Vol. I, No. 2, p. 47.

⁴Two other college professors say the direct method is identical with the natural method. Two others, that the direct method contrasts (if at all) with the old natural method in that it stresses reading instead of conversational ability. A high school teacher in Washington, D. C., tells us that the direct method "is the old natural method with the German appendages, such as phonetics, etc." For a statement of the distinction between these terms, cf., e. g., Chas. M. Purin, op. cit., p. 46 and Krause, *The Direct Method in Modern Languages*, Scribners, 1916, p. 65.

Here is a definition which might be accepted: "Teaching a foreign language as far as possible after the manner in which a child would learn it in the foreign country." The only difficulty lies in the varying interpretations of the word *possible*.

Some advocates of the direct method say: "it teaches the language not merely about the language" "not the dead letter but the living word."

Of the 74 persons making replies only 8 say unqualifiedly that the direct method does mean the entire exclusion of the vernacular from the class-room.

Thus we see that there are variations and that the term *direct method* is still *occasionally* used to characterize any and all attempts, whether haphazard or systematic, to make any considerable use of the foreign tongue taught; that, strictly speaking, it means the French *méthode directe*; that prominent scholars and teachers use the term to designate an adaptation to American needs of the strict direct method.

The use of gestures and pictures, suiting the action to the word, singing, reciting in unison, the entire exclusion of the vernacular are not universally, nor even generally, insisted upon as indispensable.

But there is almost unanimity on the following six points: 1) good pronunciation (phonetics), 2) extensive oral work, 3) inductive teaching of grammar,⁵ 4) real reading, not mere eye-reading, as the basis of the instruction, 5) translation is reduced to a minimum, 6) much use of "free composition."

Frankly, the variations in the conception of the direct method are not as prevalent as one might think from the wide range of definitions. It is my belief that the terms *direct method*, a *direct method*, whether with capital letters, or only initial capitals, with or without the article, are synonymous, or nearly so, and, in all probability, *the direct method*⁶ will replace all other appellation

⁵Prof. W. R. Myers, German, University of Michigan, says: "The direct method as we are using it here is not an inductive *grammar* method taught in the foreign idiom, but primarily a language course, in which the students are taught to see and imitate the expression of certain ideas in the foreign idiom, with sufficient training and drill in the elements of grammar to strengthen their sense of certainty and security in using the language."

⁶"I prefer direct principle," says Professor Hoskins of Princeton. Professor Almstedt of Missouri is of the same opinion. Cf. Monatshefte für deutsche Sprache und Pädagogik, Jahrgang XVI, Heft, 3.

now applied to the progressive eclecticism of modern language teaching in this country. I am convinced that the term "oral and aural training" will disappear from the *patois* of methodology and will be preserved only by a few learned pundits.

III. What do you consider the strongest argument in favor of the direct method?

In brief they are:

1) "Its physiological and psychological orthodoxy": i. e., "We naturally learn languages through the ear."

2) The interest it arouses in the student because of his sense of achievement.

3) It is a practical method.

4) The direct method makes possible the real understanding of the foreign people and the real appreciation of the literature: "We cannot feel and enjoy what we are afraid to pronounce."

5) "This direct principle in teaching has been an established fact in Germany and France for over a decade and . . . in the opinion of educators in those countries it is far superior to the methods it supplanted."⁷ In other words, those who are now using the direct method would not of their own volition go back to the old method.⁸

6) "It gives an impression of life and vitality and reality to the language being taught."

7) "It is the most expedient means of attaining: a) Good pronunciation (since it presupposes phonetic drill); b) Large active vocabulary through constant use of the more common words occurring in the reading lesson; c) Grammatical correctness which is difficult to gain by rules and written exercises.*

⁷There are, of course, some dissenters in Europe.

⁸"Would any one approve of a test of the metric system, as compared with the English system of weights and measures, by . . . [one who] knew only the latter . . . [or by one who] had only a slight and recently acquired knowledge of the former." Cited from Prof. Raymond Weeks's reply to the Whipple Experiments on the N. E. A. Alphabet.

*Opinion is not unanimous. There is a minority which will not grant any serious advantage in the direct method. For example, Prof. Thieme, Romance, Michigan, virtually says there is no argument in favor of it except for commercial purposes. Prof. Howard, German, Harvard, says: "I do not think there is any valid argument for the universal applicability of the direct method. Under special circumstances the method may, with proper modifications, be applicable." Prof. Fitz-Gerald, Romance, Illinois, replies: "Its rousing of the pupil's interest, by making him think he has learned something, of which he has only a smattering." Personally, however, I am inclined to give more

IV. What do you put as the chief objection to the direct method?

1) "There are *no* objections possible, if its principles are understood and applied correctly."

2) "Loss of time and haziness of understanding."

3) "It does not go beyond the range of concrete things."

4) "It is generally not continued long enough. Furthermore, it is often tried with classes which meet only three times a week. It is possible in a class which meets daily, but not in a three hours per class. For the American teacher it is difficult enough to express his thoughts in English, but when he struggles with the foreign idiom. * !"

(Prof. Raymond Weeks, Columbia University.)

5) "The direct method is likely not to bring the students to reading for the sake of the content." (Prof. A. G. Canfield, University of Michigan.)

6) "It covers only a part of the field. * * * So much time is given to a practical acquirement of the language as to sacrifice time, which otherwise might be devoted to getting a view of the literature." (Prof. James Geddes, Jr., of Boston University—who largely favors the direct method, however.)

These last two objections do not appear to me valid, for during the first two years, at least, the student is learning primarily the language.⁹

V. Do you favor the adoption of the direct method in college classes?

74 answers: No, 18; yes, 19; others say "partially," "somewhat," etc.

credence to Dr. Wm. R. Price, State Inspector of Modern Languages, New York, when he says: "Properly used it [the direct method] is just as good as the old method—the grammar translation method—and it has some advantages the latter does not have. However, I should never be willing to be counted wholly and exclusively as a direct-methodologist."

⁹Prof. Holbrook, MODERN LANGUAGE JOURNAL, Oct., 1916, says: "The student should never be allowed to forget that what he is primarily attempting to learn is the French language. If the texts are well chosen, his appreciation of French literature (inseparable from the medium in which it is expressed) will develop almost unaided; but one cannot become a botanist or a gardener by merely loving flowers, and usually it is those persons who know most about them who love them best. Similarly, the beauty of a linguistic construction, its fitness, should be most apparent to him who understands it best. . . ."

VI. In secondary schools?

Unqualified "yes," 27; unqualified "no," 10; others qualified their answers in various ways, e. g., "yes, presupposing a four year course and a thoroughly equipped teacher," "largely," "more so," etc. Prof. Carruth, Leland Stanford, and one or two others favor the direct method less in high schools than in colleges.

VII. In both?

11 do not answer this question specifically. 43 answer in the affirmative; 20 of these, by an unqualified "yes."¹⁰

VIII. If in one, why not in both?

1) "Students of college age must adopt short cuts. * * * The unfortunates who begin in college cannot expect to do more than learn to read the language unless they major in the subject."

2) "I cannot favor it unreservedly, at present, for the following reasons: a) Our teachers are too largely incompetent and are likely to remain so until both standards and remuneration are advanced; b) We do not keep our students for a long enough period to enable them to achieve results [of permanent value.]"

3) Prof. A. R. Seymour, Romance, Illinois, says: "Either method exclusively is a handicap, and often a bore."

4) "Pupils of high school age cannot understand or appreciate any generalization (such as grammar is) as readily as older students."¹¹

5) "If by direct method is meant a method that excludes the vernacular as much as possible, I favor its adoption anywhere and everywhere."

¹⁰Prof. Raymond Weeks, Columbia University, answers this question: "Only for beginners . . . presupposing a class that meets daily and a teacher that can speak readily," while Prof. Chas. C. Clarke, Sheffield Scientific School, says: "I do not like it in college classes except very rarely: never with beginners of French at age 17 or 18. In earlier years I believe it to be better but have no experience." This may be taken as indication of divergency of opinions, or it may indicate that I have not correctly interpreted the answers. Prof. Weeks uses only French in his advanced work. In fact, the department of Romance Languages at Columbia claims to make great use of the spoken language in the class room. However, I cannot say whether they could, or desire to be, called exponents of the direct method.

¹¹Two or three men suggest that the place for reform is in the grades, where modern foreign languages really belong. But they admit that such a change would not perhaps be for the good of the majority.

Others are of the opinion that, while pupils of high school age are more alert and more capable of acquiring languages thru the ear, nothing will ever result until the colleges take up the matter seriously and furnish teachers trained both in the language and the method. They give as their reason that in educational matters the growth is from the top downward.

Summing up the replies to questions V, VI, VII, and VIII, we may conclude that, in general, the direct method is more favored for high schools than colleges because high school students are younger and more alert and less capable of generalization than college students. A considerable number of teachers favor the same method for beginning courses in both institutions.

IX. Are you opposed to the direct method in both?

Only 8 reply by an unqualified "yes."

X. Are you now using the direct method?

"No," 16. "Yes," 19. The other replies indicate an adaptation of various features. They range from "largely" to "trying to use it."

XI. Do you contemplate adopting the direct method?

33 answers. "No," 18. Three have it already. Nine have it already in part. The others use various qualifications.¹²

XII. What, in your opinion, is the principle aim, for the average student, of a course in a modern language?

Evidence from some quarters that there is no "average student" and from others, that he has no aim! Some typical answers:

1) "It is quite different in different localities."

2) "I don't care what the student's aim is. The teacher's aim ought to be to teach thoroughly as much as possible, under the given conditions, of the language. I believe that a knowledge of the spoken language is indispensable for a proper understanding of any text read and the spoken language can only be acquired by speaking, which, of course, is really a habit based on a certain knowledge."

3) "If the idea is to learn a language, then the aim must be accuracy both in reading and speaking or writing." (Prof. Schinz, Smith College.) " * * * The *reading* is an attainable aim." (Prof. Wesselhoeft, University of Pennsylvania.)

A reading knowledge is the only aim admitted by all, but it is notable that some insist that an all-round command should be the

¹²A few replies indicate that the direct method ought to be used almost exclusively for Spanish in this country. The reasons are: a) The phonetic system of Spanish is simpler than that of French and more easily acquired by English-speaking people; b) The commercial importance of Spanish at the present moment; c) Spanish literature is of less value to an English-speaking person than French literature.

aim rather than any one-sided or partial knowledge of the language. Twenty-five mention some power of understanding by the ear and some power of expression as either essential or desirable.

XIII. What method do you think most aids in the realization of this aim?

Grammar method, 9; direct method, 12; eclectic¹³ or modified direct, 26.

Here are some of the answers:

1) "Any method based on sound pedagogical and psychological principles."

2) A teacher in an Eastern boys' school writes: "We chop it fine and ram it hard."

3) "Drill."

XIV. To what extent is your attitude toward the direct method influenced by America's geographical isolation?

The answers range from "90%" to "very little" and "not at all."

The tone of some of these answers is interesting:

1) "My pedagogy is built on my own observation of the process of learning language, is psychological, not political."

2) "In my opinion America's geographical isolation is not of a linguistic nature. There are more opportunities in America for speaking various languages than in any country in Europe. The advantages of doing it, financial, intellectual, social would soon become apparent."

3) "Considerably beyond doubt. Yet have always believed in the spoken language. The movement for better knowledge of foreign languages is bound to be accentuated, I think, and all methods which appear to promise better pronunciation and power of understanding by the ear are to prevail."

3) "All the more reason to use the direct method which is essentially cultural."

XV. Is there anything else you would like to say on the direct method?

"Not much," says one man; "Volumes, but *cui bono?*" says another.

Some replies may be worthy of note:

¹³One might object that the term "eclectic method" lacks definiteness, since some of the ardent supporters of the direct method, and rightly so it seems to me, call it essentially an eclectic method.

1) "In general I believe less in methods than I do in the necessity of teachers who have a strong personality and the power to present their subject clearly and forcibly and the ability to get work out of their students."

2) "Any good teacher of modern languages, has, long ago, adopted any of the features of the natural method that can aid in stimulating and interesting the student without adopting the 'method.'"

3) "* * * some use of the direct method puts life into the class room work no matter what the language."

4) "The worst enemy of this method is, and has been, the Berlitz school."

5) Finally we hear from the minority: "I think we are getting altogether too much of it."

XVI. Are you willing to be quoted as for or against the direct method?

I do not mention the names of those who are willing to be quoted *for or against* the method for fear of misrepresenting their modifications and view points. I quote Dr. Wm. R. Price as voicing my own views: "Teachers in school and college who make *no* use of the direct method ought to lose their jobs."

In conclusion: I have stressed the obvious in many cases, but I hope I have been fair. I do not pretend that the results of this small questionnaire absolutely prove anything. However, they possibly indicate something.

Undoubtedly there has been, and still is, much discussion of the direct method, although Mr. C. D. Frank, DeWitt Clinton High School, New York, says: "Not in the East. The Direct Method is *in* in the City of New York to stay." Prof. H. A. Almstedt of the University of Missouri says that "if our teachers were more sympathetic to language facts we would not have to discuss this question."

The word *method* is pretty generally irritating to college and university teachers. But some sort of term must be used. *The direct method* appears to be known in all quarters. It is still erroneously employed here and there as synonymous with *natural method*. Strictly it means the French *méthode directe*. I am convinced that the term is generally applied to a highly commendable eclecticism—indefinite though this term be.—Only 8 out of 74 say the direct

method means the entire exclusion of the vernacular from the class room.

To refuse to treat the direct method in a modified form as practicable and applicable to American conditions—only 8 say unqualifiedly that they are opposed to it anywhere and everywhere—is only comparable in absurdity to attempting to swallow whole a scheme of instruction devised primarily for much younger students who continue their language study much longer than ours do.

Almost all agree that in general the direct method is more suited to our high schools—assuming a minimum course of three years—than to our colleges because the high school students are younger. A large number favor the direct method procedure for college classes that meet daily.

There is almost unanimity on the following essential features of the direct method:

1) Good pronunciation (practical phonetics); 2) Real reading not mere eye-reading, forms the basis of instruction; 3) systematic oral work; 4) a modicum of grammar—preferably taught inductively; 5) A minimum of translation; 6) much use of “free” composition.

More translation and less oral work might be necessary with beginners in college, if we are to consider the mythical “average student” instead of the best student.

Opponents of the direct method say it lacks system and causes the student to tolerate, and even to love, inaccuracy. I do not believe these objections need necessarily be valid. There does not appear to be any real objection to the method. The only disagreement seems to be about its adaptability.

Regardless of terms and methods, and in spite of the utter lack of unity of aim in modern foreign language instruction, there is in all quarters, to say the least, a growing demand for more of the spoken language in the class room. I believe the direct method best meets that demand, because, from the outset, it emphasizes pronunciation and reading instead of grammar.

To me, it seems that the most important thing is an attitude of mind. Once we admit that the old method is essentially bad, the matter of adapting the salient features of the direct method to widely varying local conditions is comparatively easy.

The cohorts of the direct method are upon us. I know not all the alternatives. One may run; one may stand still and be run over. I, as you see, have joined the procession as a cymbal player though I make no claim to the distinction of being a "direct-methodist." However, if I had to choose, I should prefer to be known as an extreme partisan of the direct method rather than one of its "stand-pat" opponents.

MARK SKIDMORE.

University of Kansas.

REVIEWS

Friedrich Gerstäcker, Der Wilddieb. With Introduction, Notes, Exercises and Vocabulary by Walter R. Myers. Boston, D. C. Heath & Co., 1915. 12 mo., vi + 186 pp. (text, 100 pp.); 40 cents.

Gerstäcker is certainly 'keiner von den Grossen' in the history of German letters and his *Wilddieb* can hardly lay claim to genuine literary worth. None the less, as the editor points out, it offers "a narrative which is rapid and realistic, and which holds the interest from beginning to end," and hence possesses some distinct advantages as a text for the second or third year in secondary schools. The *Realien* are to be sure not quite those of modern Germany, and the language if "simple and direct," is also not infrequently archaistic, colloquial, and even slovenly.

The editor has cut down the original by approximately one-third. The plot of the story has not suffered through this pruning, as the work has been done with great care and very considerable skill. At times these alterations amount to an extra recasting of a paragraph of the original and the editor's statement that "the author's wording has been retained" is true only with this qualification. But if the pruning has not hurt the concatenation of the plot, it has here and there interfered with the natural sequence of thought and sentence transition. To illustrate from the opening paragraph, *tüchtig besucht* is not a strong enough expression to warrant the succeeding "Und doch war sie Krone . . .", which is however fully explained by the omitted intervening clause "und die Schenkmädchen hatten kaum Hände genug, die . . . Kunden zu bedienen." Similarly, the question "Eine bestimmte Person?" (p. 81, l. 6) finds its explanation in lines that have been eliminated. That the 'Schenkmädchen' were gotten rid of is doubtless a sign of the times, as is shown by the almost consistent dropping of references to 'Bier' and 'Wein'—a procedure that in a story dealing so largely with 'Förster' and 'Jäger' does after all to some extent destroy the milieu.

The book has been carefully printed and there is little to correct. On p. 4, l. 2, *so* should be spaced; it is accompanied by a gesture. In the same line the text of Gerstäcker, *Ausgewählte Werke* II, 2 (Jena, Costenoble) has *ich* instead of *und* and that seems the correct reading.—*ins* as a contraction for *in des* ('ins Teufels Küche', p. 43, l. 6) seems strange; rather *in 's Teufels*.—*alles mögliche* (p. 93, l. 24) requires a capital: *Mögliche*.—There are also slight errors in proof-reading on p. 8, l. 6 and p. 67, l. 9.

The Notes should have included some connected statement concerning the use of the pronouns *du*, *Ihr*, and *Sie*. The Note on p. 40, l. 25 does not suffice and besides comes too late.—The locution "als wofür Sie mich hielten" (p. 29, l. 27) requires comment (Curme, § 150, a), as does also the wholly abnormal "nach . . . der gehaltenen Jagd" (p. 55, l. 4).—*Hülle und Fülle* (p. 94, l. 19), is, of course, not an alliterative phrase and *Gerichtsaktuar* (p. 56, l. 11) has its main accent not on the last but on the second syllable.—*verfahren* on p. 33, l. 14, is not reflexive, as the Vocabulary has it.

The English Exercises are written in good, idiomatic English and will well serve their double purpose of widening and deepening the knowledge of German idiom and of furnishing a review of the chief topics of German Grammar. These Exercises are followed by a series of Fragen, "intended primarily as an aid in preparing the text for recitation." They cover approximately the first half of the story.

B. J. Vos.
Indiana University.

Lecturas Fáciles Con Ejercicios, by Lawrence A. Wilkins and Max A. Luria. Boston, Silver, Burdett & Company. 1916.
348 pp. \$1.00.

Among the many Spanish readers that are coming on the market in response to a sudden and growing demand, this one deserved at least a careful examination, in view of the attractive form that its publishers have given it, and the evident care expended in the collection of material included. The Spanish is idiomatic, not too easy, but above all not the translation from English so frequently found in text books written in this country. It is remarkably free from typographical errors.

It is undoubtedly true, as stated in the introduction, that teachers of elementary Spanish have been hampered by a lack of readers other than collections of the works of standard Spanish short-story writers, and novelists, works far too difficult to be appreciated by a high school beginner. Yet when a pupil has accomplished the *tour de force* of reading such a book, he has at least the satisfaction of feeling that he has conquered a new task and gained some little insight into the life of another race. This can scarcely be said of Part I—*Sección de Cuentos Europeos*—of the reader under discussion. The well known fable of the father, the son, and the donkey, or the familiar anecdote of the prince saved by a spider's web spun across the entrance to his cave of refuge, will scarcely hold the attention of the twentieth century youth or make him feel largely repaid for his struggles with a new language, unless it be in the satisfaction of meeting old friends in a new setting. Such stories can of course be arbitrarily located in a Spanish village without thereby gaining any Spanish atmosphere, but why the pied-piper of Hamelin, or King Alfred and the cakes? Surely it is not too much to hope that some day we shall have a reader that will combine simplicity of language and practicability of vocabulary with a subject matter really Spanish—and therefore interesting. The charming bits of Spanish life and scenery that so lavishly illustrate the *Lecturas fáciles* are crying for accompanying pages of description and comment that would give the reader a glimpse of Spain itself.

Part II—*Sección Panamericana*—contains much valuable material on the Latin American countries and may well fulfill the hope expressed in the introduction of increasing "the awakening realization among North Americans of the important place held by our sister republics of South America in the resources and commerce of the world." The language of these commercial and geographical articles is not easy, nor do they fall into the modern pedagogi-

cal error of "sugar-coated interest," but they will no doubt meet with a warm welcome in view of the tendency in most of our schools to teach Spanish with special reference to our relations with Latin America.

As for the exercises with which the book is so generously supplied, their value will depend upon the point of view of the individual teacher. To the one who is obliged to teach with inadequate preparation, they will be a real help. To the teacher with originality and ideas, they will seem unnecessary and useless, for the detailed directions will rarely meet the needs of a particular class or correlate with its other work. Many of them might well have been included in an introductory remark to teachers on the value of verb synopses, dramatization, retelling of stories, etc., thus avoiding the constant repetition of stereotyped directions. Many teachers will also object to the abundance of notes consisting of mere translation, placed at the foot of each page of reading matter. This makes life too easy for the lazy pupil and prevents his learning the proper use of a vocabulary. Could not the purpose of collecting idioms for drill have been better met by placing a list of them at the end of the lesson? As notes of an explanatory character have been avoided by the method, so fortunately gaining in favor, of including proper and geographical names in the vocabulary, while the grammatical notes are so relatively few and so simple as to be scarcely necessary for a class that presumably has done and is doing other work in grammar and composition, we should thus have a still more attractive page of pure reading matter.

No one book can hope to satisfy the varying demands of a thousand teachers yet this one with its abundance of material, its maps, its proverbs, its well chosen short poems for memorizing, will fill many needs.

MARION E. POTTER.

West Philadelphia High School, Philadelphia, Pa.

Crandall, Ernest L. *Das deutsche Heft.* New York, American Book Co., 1916. 87 pp. 35 cents.

When a new book is put into our hands, we generally ask ourselves two questions: Is this sort of a book worth while? and Has the author been successful in making it usable in the classroom? *Das deutsche Heft*, an exercise book prepared by the German faculty of the Washington Irving High School in New York City, is very much worth while and can be used very successfully, as trial in our classes has shown. The exercises in the book are, 1 excellent reviews of the classification of nouns into groups which appeal to the child and lead him to do the grouping without the aid of the teacher or text-book; 2, a drill in the uses of the adjective; 3, examples illustrating the common forms of strong and weak verbs, which the pupil follows by writing pages of original sentences. There is in the back of the book a helpful list of about 70 nouns, 40 verbs and 30 adverbs and adjectives. The pupil has here on one page a splendid vocabulary that can be used to form all sorts of sentences. A class never loses interest in working out the exercises.

It is a pity that, in a splendid book of this kind, we find on the third page under *Grammatische Ausdrücke* errors in the use of the articles (e.g., *das*

Singular, das Plural). Then, on p. 10, in the classification of mixed nouns, a misstatement under *Sachliche*. In a book arranged as this is, such errors seem almost inexcusable. Why the nouns should be called *Onkel-Wörter*, *Vater-Wörter*, *Knabe-Wörter* and so on, when the characteristics of each group are definitely printed at the head of each column, is not quite clear. But the book has many good points. Especially are the exercises under adjectives excellent. It may be recommended for the second year in the Junior High School. Not many teachers of Senior High School classes will be likely to find time for it as regular work, although it might well be used as a home study project to supplement other assignments.

FRANCES K. BURR.

Wisconsin High School, University of Wisconsin.

NOTES AND NEWS

In accordance with Resolution four adopted by the New York State Modern Language Association at the annual meeting, the President, Dr. Jonas, has appointed Professor H. C. Davidsen of Cornell University (Chairman) and Miss Frances Paget of Morris High School, New York, on the Committee on High School Texts. The Representative of the Middle States and Maryland Associations are Professor Claudine Gray, Hunter College, and Professor Julius Sachs, Teachers College, Columbia University.

The following Committee on Aim and Scope of Realien has also been named by the President: Professor Lilian L. Stroebe, Vassar College, Chairman; Professor Anna Woods Ballard, Teachers College, Columbia University; Felix A. Casassa, Hutchinson-Central High School, Buffalo; Dr. Charles H. Holzwarth, West High School, Rochester; Miss Caroline Kreykenbohm, High School, Mount Vernon.

A recent meeting of The Association of Teachers of Spanish held at the Hispanic Society of America Building, New York, was addressed by Dr. Peter H. Goldsmith, Director of the Pan-American Division of the American Association for International Conciliation. Dr. Goldsmith spoke in Spanish upon his recent trip through South American countries, the chief purpose of which was the presentation to the Museo Social Argentino of a library of ten thousand North American books, the gift of the Carnegie Endowment. The meeting was also addressed by Señor Riano, the Spanish Ambassador, who attended as a guest of Mr. Archer M. Huntington, founder of the Hispanic Society of America.

At the business session which followed, reports were read from committees showing that the efforts being made by the Association for the advancement of the study of Spanish in the New York City schools were already bearing fruit and that Spanish would soon be placed on a par with French and German in all the city schools. The society also hopes to induce universities and colleges to establish courses for the training of teachers of Spanish.

The Association was formed at a meeting on October 21st, 1916, at which the following officers were elected: President, Lawrence A. Wilkins, DeWitt Clinton High School, New York City; vice-

president, Alfred Coester, Commercial High School, Brooklyn; secretary-treasurer, Herlinda G. Smithers, Bay Ridge High School, Brooklyn; corresponding secretary, Max A. Luria, DeWitt Clinton High School. Meetings are held every two months and all teachers of Spanish are eligible for membership. Dues are one dollar a year. It is hoped that in the course of time this Association may become a national organization.

REASONS FOR THE STUDY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

1. The study of languages, of the vernacular and of foreign languages, has always held a prominent place in all modern schemes of higher education in this country no less than abroad. The burden of proof rests on those who hold that we can safely introduce a sweeping change.

2. Representing one of the oldest and best established branches of high school and college work, foreign language study has developed, in regard to text books, methods of instruction and training of teachers well tested pedagogical standards.

3. By processes of intensive attention to limited and definite amounts of linguistic material and of comparison with the mother tongue, the student develops accuracy, precision and discrimination in regard to matters of language. This develops good habits of thought and expression and thus improves the use of the mother tongue and the all-important language sense generally.

4. Similar improvement will be gained in regard to clear enunciation and correct sound differentiation, badly needed by most American students.

5. The universal and standing complaint of English teachers is that students of English alone are more deficient than others in the power both of understanding and of expressing themselves in their own tongue.

6. Work in foreign language affords the cumulative benefits of continued study in one subject, superior as a discipline to the more fragmentary value of single year courses or perhaps even semester courses.

7. Foreign languages can be well and thoroughly taught without expensive equipment of space and apparatus, an important

item in schools of limited means. Both in high school and in the university, statistics show foreign language to be practically the least expensive of the fundamental subjects.

8. Foreign language study combines, in a peculiar manner, all of the three principal elements of education: the disciplinary, the cultural (appeal to the imagination, sympathy, aesthetic sense, ethical conceptions) and the practical. English would have to be combined with mathematics to make a school subject embodying the best training inherent in foreign languages.

9. The practical value of a useful reading and speaking knowledge of a foreign language is, of course, slight in a two year course in high school. But a solid foundation can be laid even in such a course, and in a three or four year course, with good teaching, substantial gains should and can be made in this direction.

10. An adequate knowledge of things foreign cannot be gained through English translations. Furthermore, a large amount of weighty information is often found in books and periodicals which are rarely, if ever translated.

11. An at least elementary reading knowledge of French and German is of great value to every educated person and in fact indispensable in many lines of advanced work. It would be quite unsafe to leave the acquisition of such knowledge until a time when the power of acquiring a foreign language has decreased and the immediate vocational interests begin to predominate.

12. It is true, no student can foretell exactly when foreign language might be most indispensable to him in later life. But the foreign languages usually studied have so much in common in pronunciation, vocabulary and structure that the student having learned to master one of them has laid the foundation for the easy acquisition of any other which he may need in later life for purposes of scholarship, business, travel or pleasure.

13. Foreign language makes for culture and enlightenment by bringing its students into direct contact with the words and thoughts of men of other countries and times. It thus develops sympathy and understanding for the more fundamental aspects of the life and character of foreign peoples. This is especially necessary and valuable in our country in view of our composite population and our national tendency to underrate foreign achievement.

14. The United States is entering more and more fully every year into the most manifold international relations with the rest of the world. We shall be unable effectively to meet all the opportunities and obligations involved in such a position unless our educated leaders possess the ability to judge correctly of the work and endeavors of the leading nations of the world. The need of a knowledge of modern foreign languages will grow rapidly from this point of view unless we are willing to be at a great disadvantage as compared with the most progressive nations with whom we compete in all spheres of activity.

15. In the broadest sense, foreign language study confers a certain citizenship with the world. It makes the individual a conscious part of the great human unity and hereby becomes a potent force for cosmopolitanism and the peace and progress of the world. —*Bulletin of the Wisconsin Association of Modern Foreign Language Teachers*, No. 4, January, 1917.



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MODERN LANGUAGE SCHOOLS AT MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE Summer Session of 1917

FRENCH

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SPANISH

The German School will be under the direction of Prof. L. L. Stroebe, Ph.D. (Heidelberg), of Vassar College, with Co-Directors and a full staff of native German teachers. A new building provides unsurpassed accommodations for this school. The number of students is limited; one instructor is provided for every six or seven students; thorough courses in phonetics and methods are offered, with a demonstration class of children. The school continues from July 7 to August 17, 1917.

The French School will be conducted by Prof. H. P. Williamson de Visme, formerly of the University of Chicago, now director of the Ecole du Château de Soisy, France, with his Co-Director, Paul-Louis Jeanrenaud, assisted by a corps of native French teachers. Pearson's Hall will be the home of the school, with separate tables for members of the school in the great dining hall. French is continually the language of the school. The number of students is limited. From June 30 until August 10, 1917.

The Spanish School will be under the direction of Señor Julián Moreno-Lacalle, formerly of the translating staff of the Pan American Union, Washington, D. C., now of the Department of Modern Languages, United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md. The courses are intended for teachers and students of Spanish and for others who wish better acquaintance with Latin-American commerce, industries and geography. Battell Cottage will be reserved for the use of the Spanish School. From June 30 until August 10, 1917.

For further information regarding the Modern Language Schools, or other activities of the Summer Session of 1917, address

Prof. Raymond McFarland, Director,
MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE

Middlebury, Vermont